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"Appliance and Building Policies: Restoring the American Dream of Home Ownership and Consumer Choice"

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Thank you, Chairman Latta, Ranking Member Castor, and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Andrew deLaski, and I am the executive director of the Appliance Standards Awareness Project (ASAP). ASAP is a project based at the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), a nonprofit organization focused on leading and advancing energy efficiency policies, programs, and technologies across the nation. ASAP's steering committee includes representatives from consumer groups, advocates for low-income households, environmental and efficiency nonprofits, the utility sector, and state government. We carry out research, analysis, and advocacy in support of product and equipment efficiency standards that cost-effectively save energy and water, reduce economic and environmental burdens for households, reduce utility bills, and cut pollution.

This testimony first addresses appliance and equipment standards, the subject of Representative Allen's bill, H.R. 4626. The second part addresses the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), the subject of Representative Tonko's bill, H.R. 1355. The final sections address several other bills noticed for today's hearing.

H.R. 4626, Don't Mess with My Home Appliances Act

The U.S. appliance and equipment standards program, established and updated numerous times on a bipartisan basis, protects consumers and small business owners from needless energy waste. The standards ensure that manufacturers and importers include cost-effective energy-saving innovations throughout the wide variety of choices they offer, not just in top-of-the-line or

specialty products. Less energy waste means lower utility bills month after month, year after year for families. It means a more resilient electricity grid better able to meet the imperative for more capacity to handle increased load growth so we can win the race to lead the world in artificial intelligence (AI) and manufacturing.

H.R. 4626, one of the bills before you today, would hand this and future administrations new powers to cancel existing standards and would throw up roadblocks to future improvements. At a time when utility bills are already outpacing inflation, this bill would mean even higher costs for consumers. It would lead to increases in electricity demand when that capacity is needed for AI and manufacturing.

Existing law provides for a robust, fair process that protects consumer choices

Since initial enactment in the 1970s, Congress has updated and expanded the appliance and equipment standards law many times, always on a bipartisan basis. Amendments in 1987, 1988, 1992, 2005, 2007, and 2012 added products and modernized the Department of Energy's (DOE's) processes. The 1987 law included the anti-backsliding clause, which prohibits weakening standards, thereby improving regulatory certainty and protecting manufacturers' innovations and investments. The 2007 amendments, in recognition of ongoing technological progress unlocking new opportunities to cut energy waste and save money, included a new obligation for DOE to review each standard on an eight-year cycle for potential strengthening.

When DOE reviews a standard, it must update to higher levels only if technologically feasible and economically justified, taking into account consumer impacts, manufacturer impacts, competitive effects, energy system impacts and other factors (42 U.S.C. 6295(o)(2)(B)). By statute, any amended standard must ensure that the features consumers value remain available (42 U.S.C. 6295(o)(4) and 6295(q)). DOE may not set a standard that prohibits all products that use any particular fuel, such as electricity or gas (42 U.S.C 6295(q)).

DOE's standard-setting process is an open and transparent multi-step process designed to get wide-ranging input from consumers, manufacturers, utilities, and others. Many standards completed in recent years are supported by both manufacturer groups and consumer groups. DOE does not always find that updated standards are warranted. For example, the Biden administration chose to leave unchanged one third of the 36 standards it reviewed.

Appliance standards lower bills for consumers and businesses

Appliance standards are a workhorse policy for providing pocketbook and energy system benefits. According to DOE, existing efficiency standards helped the typical U.S. household spend $576 less on utility bills in 2024.[1] With rising electricity prices and manufacturers and importers coming into compliance with recently updated standards, those household savings will increase in the years ahead.

[1] U.S. DOE fact sheet, March 2025.

These utility bill savings are especially important for low- and moderate-income households. They spend more on their energy bills as a proportion of their income than wealthier households. For families that have to regularly make painful choices between essentials like housing, food, and medicine, hundreds of dollars of savings on utility bills make a real difference.

Many low- and moderate-income households are also renters. Renters are usually not able to choose the appliances their landlords purchase but typically must pay the utility bills themselves. Robust appliance standards help ensure that renters benefit from savings on their utility bills from more efficient appliances.

Businesses also save. DOE estimates that existing standards reduced consumer and business utility bills by a collective $105 billion in 2024.[2]

Efficiency standards also cut water waste. Strong standards for washing machines and dishwashers, for example, can help these appliances use less water while still ensuring strong cleaning performance—especially critical as large areas of the country face challenges with water supplies.

Polls show the public likes appliance standards

With these benefits, it's no wonder that appliance standards are very popular with the public. Polling has consistently shown wide, bipartisan support for efficiency standards. A 2025 Consumer Reports poll found 87% of respondents support appliance standards. And a majority of Americans want them strengthened: A 2024 YouGov poll found that 58% of respondents support "setting tougher energy efficiency standards for appliances," while 16% are not sure and only 26% are opposed.

Appliance standards lessen strain on the power grid

Appliance and equipment standards reduce peak electric demand. We estimate that in 2020 existing appliance efficiency standards reduced peak electric demand by 130,000 megawatts, more than the full capacity of all 94 U.S. nuclear reactors combined.[3] The capacity freed up through efficiency can help the nation meet critical new needs such as AI data centers and new manufacturing.

Consumer choice and appliance durability

Supporters of H.R. 4626 claim that consumer choices have been limited by existing standards and that standards have shortened product lifetimes. I'd like to address each of these claims. A visit to any home appliance retailer or big box store will readily confirm that consumers buying an appliance face a dizzying array of models from which to choose, and online sellers offer an even wider selection. DOE's database of products certified for sale in the U.S. show that

[2] U.S. DOE fact sheet, March 2025.

[3] Unpublished ASAP estimate.

manufacturers offer more than 11,000 distinct refrigerator models, 1,600 washing machine models and 1,400 dishwasher models. Buyers of washing machines can choose from among top-load models with and without agitators and front-load models with and without features such as steam cleaning. Some products even combine the washer and dryer in a single appliance. Buyers of refrigerators have long had the choice of side-by-side, and top- and bottom-mount units. Now they can also consider features such as see-through doors and door-in-door designs.

With respect to product durability, the data that we have reviewed from DOE's Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS) indicate that average appliance lifetimes have not changed appreciably over the past 15–20 years. There were lemons in the past, too. However, many consumers are frustrated with appliances that break before they should and require costly repairs or replacements. Notably, Consumer Reports' reliability ratings show wide variation among brands. We believe that three factors that have nothing to do with efficiency standards are leading sources of frustration. First, some brands cut corners and use cheaper materials. For example, substituting plastic for metal parts can affect durability but typically does not improve efficiency. Second, manufacturers adding additional features leads to more complex products with more parts that can fail. For example, through-the-door ice and water is a popular product feature that can be a common point of failure for refrigerators. Finally, manufacturers do not always make it easy to repair products. It can be difficult to access diagnostic information and to acquire affordable replacement parts. For example, faulty electronic controls generally require a new control panel available only from the manufacturer.

H.R. 4626 would aid the administration's efforts to take away existing standards, paralyzing manufacturers and hurting American families. It also would stymie future standards.

H.R. 4626 would attack the appliance standards law's anti-backsliding clause, weaken states' rights by preempting states even when no federal standards apply, eliminate DOE's obligation to review standards periodically, and set additional roadblocks designed to stymie future progress. Proponents of the bill claim it would protect consumer choices related to fuel and other features that consumers value, but existing law already provides these protections. I'd like to highlight five ways that this bill would undercut the effectiveness of the U.S. standards law.

First, it would severely weaken the law's anti-backsliding clause. Current law says that DOE cannot weaken an appliance standard, an essential part of the program's success through multiple administrations and a key protection for manufacturers. With this bill, Congress would grant the executive branch new powers it could use to try to get rid of today's standards. It would direct DOE to "evaluate" standards in the two years after they are finalized, creating immediate uncertainty for manufacturers, who are already investing in upgrading their product lines to prepare for set compliance dates. DOE could then revoke a standard if it finds that it is not "technologically feasible and economically justified." While all finalized standards must already meet these criteria (and are subject to judicial review), the current administration or any future administration could concoct dubious or erroneous new analyses or reasoning to justify such a revocation, and dare courts to reject them—with the outcomes uncertain. This could paralyze manufacturers' ability to appropriately build and plan out their manufacturing processes and

could open the door for foreign manufacturers to import inferior products after domestic manufacturers have invested in better efficiency.

Indeed, this administration has already shown that it would like to remove existing standards, including some that have provided consumer protections for decades. In May, DOE issued proposed rules that would weaken or eliminate 17 standards, including those for clothes washers, dishwashers, and dehumidifiers. Based on DOE's analyses, the rollbacks already proposed could, if completed and permitted to stand, raise costs for families and businesses by $43 billion and increase peak demand by 6.7 gigawatts, an amount equal to the output of 22 large power plants.[4] Notably, not a single manufacturer or manufacturer group supported the administration's proposed rollbacks. Some argued that eliminating existing standards would open U.S. markets to cheaply made imported products, undercutting U.S. manufacturers and jobs. While these current proposals appear to be illegal, the pending bill would create a potential new legal pathway for the administration to try to advance rollbacks.

H.R. 4626 goes much further still: if DOE successfully eliminated a product's efficiency standard under the bill, **states would be specifically prohibited from setting their own standards for the product.** For decades, states have set standards to protect their consumers and strengthen their energy systems when there is no federal standard. At a time when states are facing unprecedented challenges to keep the lights on while promoting economic development with associated new electric demand, allowing unlimited energy waste while barring states from doing anything about it kneecaps their ability to protect consumers and promote growth.

Third, it would eliminate DOE's obligation to review standards periodically, reducing DOE's accountability. Before Congress enacted the obligation for DOE to conduct regular reviews for all standards in 2007, DOE had a track record of slow-walking reviews that lacked legal deadlines, sacrificing billions of dollars of savings. We estimate that future updates that could be completed over the next decade have the potential to add another $150 in annual bill savings for households and reduce business costs by $13.8 billion annually while cutting U.S. peak electric demand by 32 gigawatts, or about 5%. Absent required reviews, it's unlikely that DOE will complete the updates that could yield these benefits.

And while sometimes we hear from manufacturers that we have reached a point of diminishing returns, the record shows that innovation—driven in large part by regulatory change—keeps lowering the cost to improve efficiency and opening up even larger savings opportunities for consumers. For example, after new washing machine standards adopted in 2012 took effect in 2018, the best top loaders got better. The most efficient top-loading washers on the market today are 35% more efficient than the very best top-loading washer DOE identified in 2012, and many excel in cleaning performance tests. Academic studies have shown this effect.[5] Furthermore, in

[4] ASAP Policy Analysis, August 2025.

[5] Brucal, Arlan, and Michael Roberts. 2017. *Do Energy Efficiency Standards Hurt Consumers? Evidence from Household Appliance Sales*. Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment. https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Working-paper-266-Brucal-Roberts.pdf.

cases where updates are not warranted, DOE can quickly determine to leave standards unchanged, as it did for one third of standards reviewed in recent years.

Fourth, it would set arbitrary minimum savings thresholds that would leave significant utility bill savings on the table. This legislation would prohibit DOE from updating a standard if it would save less than 0.3 quadrillion Btu of energy and reduce energy or water use by less than 10%—even though standards that don't meet these arbitrary thresholds can bring significant cost savings to families and businesses. That amount of electricity represents more than $15 billion in savings for American families at current residential prices.

Fifth, it would prohibit standards—no matter their savings for consumers—in cases where the additional upfront cost is paid back in more than three years, even for products that last for decades. This would block many standards. For example, a 2014 standard for commercial refrigeration equipment was estimated to save businesses a net of nearly $1,000 over the life of a certain type of model. But it would have been prohibited under this bill because it takes 5.7 years to pay back, even though the product lasts an average of 10–15 years.

This is not an exhaustive list of how this bill would undercut existing standards and set hurdles for future products.

The sponsor of H.R. 4626 touts the bill as protecting consumers. But existing law already requires that standards be "technologically feasible and economically justified." By law, DOE must also ensure that consumers continue to have access to product features they value, and the department is expressly prohibited from eliminating categories of products that use a particular fuel type, such as gas. H.R. 4626 only protects energy waste.

In conclusion, H.R. 4626 would potentially enable the elimination of existing standards and make it much harder to update standards in the future. This bill would raise costs for consumers, increase peak electric demand at a time when demand is rising sharply, and interfere with states' rights.

H.R. 1355, Weatherization Enhancement and Readiness Act of 2025

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) helps low-income families by making energy efficiency improvements to their homes. Since 1976, WAP has funded and provided training to community assistance programs across the United States to make more than 7 million homes more energy efficient. Using energy assessments, contractors determine a package of efficiency measures that are appropriate and cost-effective for each home, such as sealing air leaks, adding insulation, and replacing old heating and cooling equipment.

For more than four decades, WAP has reduced energy usage in the homes of low-income families. DOE estimates that these upgrades help each household save $372 on average in energy

bills each year.[6] For every $1.00 invested in weatherization, $1.72 is generated in energy savings.[7] And while these energy and cost savings are important, this same investment results in $2.78 in health and other benefits that are perhaps even more important to vulnerable communities: lower rates of asthma and respiratory illness, more money to pay for medications, and better home comfort. The program also leads to significant reductions in pollutants, ranging from CO_2 to harmful NOx. WAP also trains and employs thousands of workers, often from the same low-income communities that benefit from home improvements.

While WAP is highly successful, increased program flexibility is necessary. Certain limitations in the program's rules hamper its potential to cut energy bills as much as needed and to prepare homes for worsening weather conditions and natural disasters. Additionally, some constraints on the program prevent low-income households from accessing innovative technologies.

H.R. 1355 reauthorizes WAP until 2030 and makes some major strides to address these issues, investing more money in eligible homes, fixing homes that need repairs before weatherization, extending an innovation grant program, improving access to cost-effective renewable energy technologies, and clarifying "re-weatherization" restrictions.

First, the average cost limit per unit, or ACPU, is currently set in statute at $6,500 per home (with a small annual escalator). As prices rise for labor and materials, and new resilience measures are added to the menu of efficiency investments, fewer measures fit under the cap. WAP workers are also often underpaid compared to their industry counterparts, and as private-sector wages rise, trained workers are increasingly unavailable to many WAP providers. Wage growth without a higher ACPU means program officials must reduce the number of upgrades per house.

The $6,500 ACPU limit also creates perverse incentives. After serving very low-income applicants in disadvantaged areas whose houses need significant upgrades, WAP teams may be forced to find homes that need few improvements in order to keep the ACPU down. This stands at odds with the program's goal of serving those most in need.

The bill would increase the ACPU to $12,000, permitting the program to keep pace with rising costs and enabling deeper retrofits with greater savings.

Second, many eligible homes are too dilapidated to support the upgrades made by WAP. Either the home structure itself cannot make use of them due to defects like leaking roofs, or work teams are unable to enter due to unsafe conditions like rotting stairs (which many low-income people live with every day). Yet typically, only $500 of WAP funds for a home may be used toward incidental repairs. According to the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSP), many states have deferral rates—the amount of income-eligible homes that

[6] U.S. DOE, Weatherization Assistance Program web page.

[7] U.S. DOE, "Weatherization Assistance Program" Fact Sheet, 2021.

are structurally unfit to receive upgrades—at or approaching 20%.[8] But one state that had such a 20% rate just 3 years ago saw that drop to 9% after the state government created a trust to fix a common structural problem in its homes.

These repairs come in all forms. NASCSP has collected many stories from eligible homes that were unable to receive weatherization assistance because of the incidental repair limit:

- A senior citizen in Aberdeen, WA, who is partially disabled was deferred from weatherization assistance due to extensive rot in his home. A state program helped him repair these issues and then a WAP contractor was able to fully insulate the home—reducing his annual heating bill in his home built in 1912.
- A single mother with small children had a leaky roof, preventing the safe and effective installation of attic insulation, which was badly needed.
- A couple with four children living in housing in need of insulation, updated ventilation, and more was found to have lead-based paint, creating a hazard for family and workers if disturbed. The family was deferred for weatherization services.
- A disabled elderly client living in a manufactured home had rotten flooring that was not safe to walk on, preventing a crew from safely entering the home and installing necessary health and safety and weatherization measures.

This bill authorizes a much needed "weatherization readiness fund" that would allow WAP teams to complete major repairs in order to make homes structurally sound and safe for installers. Congress has included limited funding for this purpose in Energy and Water appropriations bills since FY2022 that has helped all states help their families in most need of assistance.

Third, the bill would permanently extend an enhancement and innovation competitive grant program that uses a small percentage of WAP funds to support states, community programs, and nonprofit organizations implementing new methods, hiring employees from the communities receiving aid, expanded health and safety measures, weatherization readiness, and renewable energy. These funds have been especially helpful in enabling nonprofit organizations to participate in the program, extending services to apartment buildings and mobile homes, and providing workforce development.

Fourth, renewable technology installations are limited to $3,000 per home in the WAP program. When this was set in statute, these kinds of upgrades were relatively uncommon and seen as untested. That is no longer the case. Residential renewable energy systems, especially solar, are much cheaper and well understood, and reliably reduce energy use and energy bills. This legislation would remove that cap and allow low-income households to benefit from proven technology where it makes sense. Renewable measures would still be subject to the cost-

[8] E4theFuture, "Weatherization Barriers Toolkit," 2022. https://e4thefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/E4-EFG_Weatherization-Barriers-Toolkit-4-7-2022.pdf.

effectiveness requirements that apply to all measures and to the overall funding cap per home. They would just be treated on an equal basis with other measures.

Finally, current law prohibits installing more WAP measures in a home until 15 years have passed since a retrofit under the program. It also has language that can be read to imply that a WAP agency must investigate the records of *every* other similar federal program to be sure that no other agency has weatherized that unit in the past 15 years. Thus, for example, a home that has received assistance under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program for a new heater might be deemed ineligible for air sealing or more insulation. This bill removes reference to other programs to allow for more efficient upgrades of low-income homes.

These modifications will further strengthen the WAP program and enable it to better assist low-income households to significantly reduce energy waste and thus energy bills that they cannot afford.

H.R. 5184 – Affordable HOMES Act

In contrast to its successful appliance standards program, DOE has been ineffective in protecting manufactured home residents from needlessly high energy bills. Unfortunately, H.R. 5184 would make things worse.

Manufactured homes are vital for providing housing for low-income residents, especially in rural areas. Roughly 17 million Americans live in manufactured homes, with a median household income of just $40,000.[9] So it is especially troubling that manufactured homes have larger energy bills per square foot than site-built homes or apartment buildings, with an average cost of $1,773 in 2020. More than a third of manufactured home residents reported they had to reduce or forgo food or medicine to pay their energy bills.[10] States and sometimes local governments set energy standards for most new homes in their building codes, but the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development sets standards for manufactured homes (the "HUD Code").

As a group of energy efficiency and manufactured home advocates wrote to DOE earlier this year:[11]

> It has been more than 30 years since the current manufactured home energy standards (in the HUD Code) were last modified in 1994. During that time the International Energy Conservation Code for site-built homes was first published in 1998 and then updated in 2000, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2021, and 2024.
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> It has been 17 years since President Bush signed the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which directs DOE to set standards.

[9] U.S. Census, 2023 American Housing Survey.

[10] U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2020 Residential Energy Consumption Survey.

[11] Joint Comments on Energy Conservation Standards for Manufactured Housing Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Extension of Compliance Date, 2025.

It has been 13 years since the 2011 deadline Congress set for DOE's initial standards. Manufacturers have shipped more than one million homes since then, the vast majority saddling their residents with energy waste and high energy bills.

It has been almost 10 years since a negotiated rulemaking reached a consensus agreement for the standards in 2015, and 9 years since DOE first proposed draft standards in 2016.

It has been 3 years since DOE finally issued the standards in 2022, and 2 years since the standards were originally supposed to take effect in 2023. DOE then postponed that initial compliance date, citing the need to develop enforcement procedures.

It has been 17 months since DOE proposed enforcement procedures for the standards in 2023.

When DOE finally allows them to take effect, the standards will help reduce the total cost of ownership of these homes. Until then, every month of further delay means thousands more residents will be burdened for decades by energy waste they cannot afford.

The DOE standard is not stringent—it is significantly weaker than the 2021 IECC for site-built homes on which it was supposed to be based. But it still would result in important savings compared to the HUD Code. DOE found back in 2022 that the standard for double-wides would save residents $475 a year in energy bills, resulting in $3,573 in discounted net savings over 30 years (in 2020 dollars). The standard for single-wides is weaker and would yield much smaller savings.[12]

To protect the low-income residents of these homes, Congress should press DOE to issue enforcement procedures and let the standard take effect, or else make the standard effective legislatively. And then DOE should update and strengthen the standard based on the 2024 IECC, as required by the law. More than 58,000 homes have already been built to the much higher DOE Zero Energy Ready Homes criteria throughout the country, most in the last year.[13] Residents of those homes have much lower energy bills and thus more affordable homes, as well as healthier, more comfortable, more durable homes.

Instead, H.R. 5184 would get rid of the DOE standard entirely, leaving thousands more families each month to struggle to pay their energy bills in leaky, inefficient homes. That is not a way to achieve energy affordability.

H.R. 4690, Reliable Federal Infrastructure Act

[12] DOE, Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Manufactured Housing, 87 Fed. Reg. 32,728.

[13] https://www7.eere.energy.gov/buildings/residential/explorezerh/partners.

Federal building standards save taxpayers money by reducing energy waste and lead the way to commercial buildings that are cheaper to operate, healthier, and more resilient to disasters. H.R. 4690 would remove key components of those standards that were added on a bipartisan basis by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. While DOE was slow to implement part of those provisions, they now promote efficient technologies such as heat pumps, which move heat into or out of buildings as needed with less waste than electric resistance or combustion heating. To promote government efficiency and reduce government waste, Congress should ensure effective implementation of these provisions along with related provisions on energy audits and retrofits in existing federal buildings. H.R. 4690 would instead weaken standards and enable more government waste.

H.R. 4758, Homeowner Energy Freedom Act

Building energy codes have similar benefits as appliance standards, starting with saving homeowners and renters money on energy bills and reducing load on the electric grid. The cheapest and easiest time to lock in these savings for decades is when the building is designed and built. Up-to-date codes reduce energy use by a third compared to codes currently in effect in some states and localities, saving families and businesses thousands of dollars. For example, a typical lower-income family that uses an FHA loan to buy a new house built to the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) would save $963 in energy bills in just the first year. While they would pay $550 more in down payment and other up-front costs, that is quickly paid back by the ongoing energy savings, and the buyer comes out ahead in 1.5 years, even accounting for the added $439 in annual mortgage payments. Over 30 years, savings add up to more than $15,000 net present value.[14] A low-income family in a high-rise apartment saves $224 a year with virtually no up-front cost, and a home built to the more recent 2024 IECC saves even more.

More and more home buyers and renters are reaping these benefits as a dozen states and many cities have adopted the 2021 IECC (or stronger codes) with no apparent effect on the pace of home construction[15]—despite shocking claims by code opponents of the cost that are simply false and based on measures that are not required by the code.[16] But federal assistance is critical to help states and localities with code development, analysis, training, and boosting compliance.

For the 130 million existing homes, most of which were not built with up-to-date technologies, retrofits are essential to cut energy waste and bills. Many families require assistance, most of which comes from ratepayer-funded programs in about half the states. These programs to cut energy waste are cheaper than building more power plants and gas pipelines just to supply the wasted energy. But federal assistance also is important. I already discussed what has been the

[14] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Agriculture, Final Determination: Adoption of Energy Efficiency Standards for New Construction of HUD- and USDA-Financed Housing, 89 Fed. Reg. 33112, 2024.

[15] ACEEE, Comments in response to HUD-USDA Notice for Comment, 2025.

[16] ACEEE, NAHB's Fictitious Building Code Cost Claim, 2025.

largest federal program, for low-income weatherization, but DOE rebates and contractor training also are helping states around the country deliver savings for their families.

H.R. 4758 would try to stop important codes, rebates, and training programs, increasing energy costs and strain on the grid.

H.R. 4593, Saving Homeowners from Overregulation With Exceptional Rinsing (SHOWER) Act

Congress enacted showerhead standards in 1992. Although early models that complied with the statutory standards had some performance problems, manufacturers solved these problems decades ago, and now there are a wide range of high-performing showerheads on the market.[17] Consumer Reports found that "water flow really doesn't predict performance" and that the best models available today—and most models—use less water than allowed by the federal standard. Many states have their own showerhead standards with lower flow rates than permitted by the U.S. standards.

Earlier this year, pursuant to an executive order, DOE withdrew the regulatory definition of a showerhead, reverting to the 1992 statutory definition. This bill would substitute a 2024 definition from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. It does not change the efficiency requirement for showerheads.

Conclusion

At a time when electricity bills are on the rise and the U.S. needs to increase electricity capacity to meet the growing needs of AI, commonsense measures that help families save energy and reduce their utility bills are needed more than ever. Congress should reject legislation that weakens the U.S. appliance efficiency standards law and other policies that cut energy waste and save families money. Congress should support legislation that strengthens the weatherization assistance program that helps low-income families.

[17] ASAP fact sheet.